

Message Text

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ACTION SPM-01

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 IO-14 ISO-00 OIC-04 SS-20 L-03 NSC-07

AID-20 HEW-08 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 EB-11

SWF-02 DRC-01 /128 W

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R 291513Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3661

INFO USMISSION GENEVA

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SPOP, ECE

SUBJECT: ECE DISCUSSION OF WORLD POPULATION CONFERENCE,

MAY 29-JUNE 1

REF: STATE 104042

SUMMARY: VAN BOVEN (MFA), WHO WILL BE NETH DELEGATE TO SUBJECT CONFERENCE, OFFERED SOME INFORMAL VIEWS ON TALKING POINTS PROVIDED IN REFTEL. END SUMMARY.

1. EMBOFF PROVIDED VAN BOVEN (MFA) "NON-PAPER" COVERING UNCLASS TALKING POINTS TRANSMITTED REFTEL. VAN BOVEN INDICATED GON IS JUST STARTING TO FOCUS ON WORLD POP CONF AND HAS THEREFORE NOT YET DEVELOPED FORMAL VIEWS. NEVERTHELESS, HE, AS WELL AS COLLEAGUES EVERTS AND SCHLINGERMANN (LATTER WILL ACCOMPANY VAN BOVEN TO ECE MTG), OFFERED OWN OBSERVATIONS, WHICH ARE LIKELY TO BE REFLECTED IN EVENTUAL GON POSITION. IN GENERAL, VAN BOVEN CHARACTERIZED GON THINKING ON CONFERENCE AND WORLD PLAN AS "APPROXIMATELY IN THE MIDDLE BETWEEN BRAZILIAN AND US POSITIONS". WHILE AGREEING WITH GENERAL THRUST OF "TALKING POINTS", HE EXPRESSED VIEW THAT IT MAY NOT BE DESIRABLE TO TRY INJECT TOO MUCH SPECIFICITY INTO WORLD PLAN (FOR EXAMPLE, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IN TERMS OF SPECIFIC POP GROWTH TARGETS FOR LDCS OR SPECIFIC

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GOVERNMENTS), SINCE ATTEMPT TO DO SO WOULD ENCOUNTER STRONG OPPOSITION FROM A NUMBER OF LDC'S. NUMBER OF SUCH OPPONENTS MAY BE SUFFICIENTLY LARGE SO THAT IF THEIR OBJECTIONS ARE ALL REFLECTED IN CONFERENCE DOCUMENTS, WORLD PLAN WOULD IN EFFECT BE WATERED DOWN, RESULTING PERHAPS IN NET LOSS.

2. VAN BOVEN EXPRESSED AGREEMENT WITH VIEW THAT QUESTIONS OF ECON/SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT ON ONE HAND AND POP GROWTH ON THE OTHER ARE INTERDEPENDENT, AND THAT THESE NEED TO BE VIEWED AS TWO ASPECTS OF SAME QUESTION. HE ALSO EXPRESSED SYMPATHY WITH POSITION THAT CONFERENCE OUGHT TO TACKLE SUBJECT AT ISSUE, WITHOUT DEGENERATING INTO INCOHERENCE THROUGH INJECTION OF EXTRANEIOUS ISSUES. HOWEVER, HE CAUTIONED THAT CONFERENCE SHOULD NOT, ON THE OTHER HAND, BECOME MERELY AN EXERCISE IN DEMOGRAPHY, SINCE MANY ISSUES IMPINGE ON POPULATION PROBLEM AND OUGHT NOT BE LEFT OUT OF DISCUSSIONS. EXPANDING ON THIS POINT, VAN BOVEN INDICATED THAT SOME WITHIN GON VIEW POP CONFERENCE AND FORTH-COMING WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE AS COMPLEMENTARY TO EACH OTHER AND BOTH OF THESE CONFERENCES AS TOOLS FOR FURTHER REFINING AND AND UPDATING DDII.

3. VAN BOVEN EXPRESSED DOUBTS CONCERNING DESIRABILITY OF INCLUDING RECOMMENDATIONS WITH DEGREE OF SPECIFICITY SUGGESTED IN POINTS 9 AND 10 OF TALKING POINTS. WHILE HE IS NOT A POPULATION EXPERT, HE SAID, HE WONDERS WHETHER SUGGESTED TARGETS ARE ACHIEVABLE, AND, EVEN IF THEY ARE, WHETHER MANY GOVERNMENTS WOULD NOT REGARD THESE AS ATTEMPT BY RICH COUNTRIES TO DICTATE POLICY. EVERTS ADDED THAT VERY FEW GOVERNMENTS PARTICIPATING AT THE CONFERENCE ARE LIKELY TO RUN HOME AFTER THE PROCEEDINGS TO START IMPLEMENTING SPECIFIC CONFERENCE RECOMMENDATIONS. IT IS MORE LIKELY, HE SAID, THAT GOVERNMENTS WHO ARE CONCERNED WITH POPULATION PROBLEMS AND WHO HAVE SEEN THE NEED FOR DEVELOPING NATIONAL POPULATION POLICIES WILL PROCEED WITH THESE PROGRAMS ACCORDING TO THEIR RESPECTIVE PERCEPTIONS OF NATIONAL INTEREST.

4. IN TERMS OF WHAT OUTCOME OF POP CONFERENCE OUGHT TO BE, VAN BOVEN SUGGESTED SECRETARIATS' THIRD DRAFT, WHICH RECENTLY RELEASED IN UNEDITED VERSION, COMES PRETTY CLOSE TO DUTCH THINKING AT THE MOMENT. HE CHARACTERIZED THIRD DRAFT AS AN IMPROVEMENT OVER LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PREVIOUS SUBMISSIONS AND WAS PARTICULARLY PLEASED WITH EVIDENCE OF NEW FOCUS ON AREAS OF INFORMATION AND EDUCATION. ONE ISSUE WHICH HE HOPES WILL BE CONSIDERED IS FOLLOW-UP TO CONFERENCE. SHOULD NEW MACHINERY BE CREATED, OR SHOULD PRESENT MACHINERY BE STRENGTHENED, FOR EXAMPLE, THROUGH DELEGATION OF REVIEW AND APPRAISAL FUNCTION TO POP CONF?

5. COMMENT: VAN BOVEN WAS PLEASED AT HAVING HAD OPPORTUNITY

TO PREVIEW USG THINKING AND IS IN SYMPATHY WITH US DESIRE
THAT CONFERENCE HAVE MEANINGFUL OUTCOME. HE IS VERY SENSITIVE,
HOWEVER, TO ATTITUDES OF SOME LDC'S WHOSE OUTLOOK ON POPULATION
QUESTIONS DIFFERE SUBSTANTIALLY FROM THAT OF US. US IS
LIKELY TO FIND GON POSITION SYMPATHETIC IN GENERAL BUT WILL
PROBABLY FIND DUTCH TAKING BACK SEAT ON SPECIFIC POLICY
PROPOSALS OF THE TYPE SUGGESTED IN TALKING POINTS. SINCE
DUTCH WILL PROBABLY TAKE MIDDLE GROUND, HOWEVER, THEIR POSSIBLE
ROLE AS A BRIDGE BETWEEN US VIEWS AND THOSE OF MORE RADICAL
LDC'S ON THIS SUBJECT, SUCH AS BRAZIL, OUGHT TO BE KEPT IN
MIND. WHILE VAN BOVEN IS NEW TO POPULATION MATTERS (HE SHARES
OUR CONCERN THAT WORLD PLAN BE READABLE AND INTELLIGIBLE TO NON-
EXPERTS SUCH AS HIMSELF), HE HAS HAD CONSIDERABLE UN EXPERIENCE,
PARTICULARLY AS MEMBER OF UN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION FOR
LAST SEVERAL SESSIONS. HE IS LEVEL-HEADED AND CAN BE COUNTED
ON AS A MODERATING FORCE WHEN NEEDED.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLICIES, DOCUMENTS, MEETING AGENDA, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, OVERPOPULATION, MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 29 MAY 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: WorrelSW
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974THEHA02663
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740135-0279
From: THE HAGUE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t1974059/aaaaahtq.tel
Line Count: 132
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SPM
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: STATE 104042
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: WorrelSW
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28 MAY 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <28 MAY 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <25 MAR 2003 by WorrelSW>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ECE DISCUSSION OF WORLD POPULATION CONFERENCE, MAY 29-JUNE 1
TAGS: SPOP, NL, ECE, (VAN BOVEN)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005